



Founder's Message: Power of positive thinking

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Many years ago (at my high school graduation to be exact), I had the opportunity to listen to Dr. Norman Vincent Peale tell us about the power of positive thinking. At the time, Dr. Peale was the pastor of the largest Protestant church in the country. A few of his ideas stuck in my then still slowly developing brain and emerged to help me when I entered the dark and scary business world. He dared suggest that no school was set up to prepare anyone for what they would be faced with in an overly competitive Capitalistic society - and boy was he right. He also explained how science had proven that man can only entertain one thought at one time. Therefore, it is man's own choice to allow it to be negative or positive.

A negative thought is much more powerful and engulfing he explained, and strongly suggested that we go to all and any lengths to avoid it. To get our attention (over 200 males) he used baseball as a base of his discussion. He was from New York, and he talked about the Brooklyn Dodgers, knowing it would keep us all awake. He explained that when Brooklyn's best hitter Duke Snider is batting against the Boston Braves ace Warren Spahn he says to himself, "I know I can hit him. I know I can hit him. I know I can hit him." And then he either does or doesn't. But what if he said, "Damn, Spahn is the strike out king. I can't get a hit off him. I can't. I can't. I can't." Hey, you young guys and gals, did you know that the Dodgers played in Brooklyn and the Braves played in Boston back in the fifties? So why am I telling you about Dr. Peale?

Apparently, this recession is going to continue for a while longer, so I guess it is up to us to ignore it and learn how to succeed in it. We can say, "How can I make a living in a recession?" Or we can be like Duke Snider and say, "I know I can. I know I can. I know I can." And then do it. And it may mean change. Lots of change.

Plato said, "Change is bane." Don't bother to look that up. You can guess what bane means. So if you ever studied recessions (and I did) two things good happen in recessions. (That's thinking positive, isn't it?)

By the way, Snider's lifetime batter over .300 against Spahn, suggests that his positive attitude worked against the odds. He eventually admitted that he changed stuff by shortening up on his swing .

And here's what else happens in recessions. In the terrible recession of 1989-1991, two of my biggest competitors went out of business. That strongly suggests that recessions (that by the way come along historically every 17 years) maybe develop for a reason. To shake the dead leaves out of the trees? So what do you do as we enter the fourth year of the latest recession? You look to see if you are still in business, and if you are you go back to work like you did with the same attitude when you started your business. Remember? You started with two strikes against you, and then you hustled your butt off. Right? And then you say over and over like Hall of Famer Duke Snider, "I know I can. I know I can. I know I can." And I guarantee you will. You know how I know that? Because Dr.

Peale said you would.

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